Codename Mini Cocoa Puffs

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Codename Mini Cocoa Puffs

by FujinoLover

Summary

As if dealing with Aaron wasn't intriguing enough for Villanelle, another sociopath joined the party, bringing an all-seeing God in her ear.

After a string of men in suits, some a bit rough on the edge while others were razor sharp, Villanelle was bored. Aaron's act of unveiling every potential buyer's deepest secrets could only entertain her for so many times before it lost its element of surprise. He reveled in the fear he instilled, but it only made her wanted to kill him and steal the program herself. Information is everything, after all. Her boredom vanished when finally, it was a woman who joined them over *merenda*.

Villanelle zeroed in on the woman the moment she walked through the doorway. She was small, about Eve's height. Her hair was long, pulled into a low ponytail. The leather jacket she wore over her plain black t-shirt was old, well-worn, and a bit too big on her small frame that the sleeves extended to cover half of her hands. There was no jewelry adorning her body, just her nails painted in black. There were slight bulges on her jacket and left ankle that meant either the security team didn't pat her down or Aaron was just too cocky, assuming that he knew everything about everyone. Villanelle sat up straighter, something tingling in the back of her mind as she watched the woman's mannerism—the way she scanned through the room in one quick sweep before choosing to sit next to her, facing the entryways, much to Aaron's annoyance because she was supposed to sit across from her.

"You made it in time, Miss Turing," Aaron said, a subtle jab that hit nothing. "Please." He motioned at the whiskey Mrs. Leary had prepared beforehand, probably something of Miss Turing's preference that he knew from his intrusive snooping.

Miss Turing—or whatever her real name was, because Villanelle was sure she was no longer the only person in the room who was playing someone else—didn't show the surprise Aaron expected. She muttered a low *thanks*, pouring two fingers into the glass but made no attempt to drink it. Instead, she spared a glance at Villanelle, holding her gaze for a second too long, before staring at Aaron. Their expression the perfect imitation of stonewalls. Villanelle hid her grin behind a sip of her Masseto. Sharks come out when there is blood in the water and it really does take one to know one.

"How much do you wish to bid?"

"I don't," Miss Turing said in American accent. "I'm here to buy it. Name your price and it'll be transferred to your account."

The brashness wasn't a put off for Aaron, he indeed did like it when someone stood up against him. "Don't you want to know what you're buying first?" He scrutinized her appearance, noting that nothing from her leather jacket to combat boots were up to his standard of perfection. "Shouldn't you call your boss first before making such outrageous proposal? You are but a lackey in Thornhill Company."

"I know *exactly* what you're selling. My boss would've wanted me to tell you what a mistake you're making and what an evil multinational company like Decima Technologies is going to do with your program, but you're not interested in that."

It was the first time Villanelle saw Aaron cracked. He enjoyed unraveling others down to the bones, rattling their cage until they cowered in fear and accepted his superiority. He was a

bully, and now he was being bullied. Villanelle longed to lie back on the unfairly comfortable couch, snacking more of the sliced-open *focaccia* stuffed with *mortadella* while watching the banter, if not for doing so would shift Aaron's attention to herself and she really couldn't stand his micromanaging.

"That's quite bold of you." Aaron kept his face straight, but he continued to taunt her. "I might not feel like selling it to you anymore."

Miss Turning raised a brow. "But you are not selling it, not completely."

Villanelle had figured out as much. Someone like Aaron, a total control freak, wouldn't simply give up such strong weapon in return for some cash—he had a lot of money, he didn't need more. He wanted to play, to show everyone how big his dick was. He would have a way to control the program, she just didn't know how.

Aaron's lips set in a thin line. "Of course I won't."

"Since we have established that," Miss Turing began, standing then walked up to him. He didn't like her towering over him, so he stood as well, using his height as an advantage. He was just too blind—too wrapped up in his ego to realize a real threat. "I don't think talkin' will do much." With that said, she swung a punch straight to his face.

Aaron dropped back to his seat. His nose was bleeding, probably broken as red dripped over the pristine white upholstery, but this time he wasn't conscious to fuss about it. Poor Aaron got hit by women twice in the span of a week. Villanelle watched on, undisturbed. Everyone insisted on her to just get the names of the buyers and not killing him, but no one said anything about her letting someone else killed him.

"Who are you?" Villanelle, or rather, Billie asked. "Why did you knock him out?" she added, an afterthought for Eve's sake over the mic.

Miss Turing had shoved Aaron to the floor then, taking his seat and turning on his dormant laptop. It was password protected. "You can drop the accent, Villanelle." She didn't call her *Oksana* despite The Machine had told her more than enough.

Villanelle repeated, in her real accent. "Who are you?"

"A friend," Miss Turning said. "You can call me Shaw."

By then, Shaw had disabled the password and was searching through the data. There was an encryption protecting the program, this one had an ever changing algorithm attached to it and while Shaw was getting better at hacking, she was on a bit of a clock this time.

The Machine chimed in, "*How's the meeting going, sweetie?*"

Shaw couldn't stop the smile from forming on her lips. It was easy to keep the line blurred between Her and Root. "The guy isn't talking," she said, then to Villanelle's *what?*, she tapped her ear. "I wasn't talking to you."

"*You knocked him out, didn't you?*" The Machine let out an exasperated sigh, although it didn't lessen the fondness filling Her every word. "*I told you to use your words, sweetie.*"

Shaw rolled her eyes. "We don't have time for this."

"*I'll take it from here.*"

With a short USB cable, Shaw connected her phone to Aaron's laptop. Line after line of codes ran on the screen as The Machine worked to crack the encryption. She looked up then, noticing that Villanelle was still sitting on her spot, a lot more relaxed and unbothered by the sudden change of event.

"In fifteen seconds, Mrs. Leary is coming in to check. I need more time." Shaw pointed to the open entryway on her left, right across Villanelle. "Can you take care of her?"

"Fifteen seconds?"

"Thirteen." When Villanelle didn't show any indication that she was going to do what Shaw asked, she added, "Trust me."

"People who tell you to trust them usually shouldn't be trusted," Villanelle said around a mouthful of *focaccia*.

Shaw gritted her teeth. If she wasn't preoccupied with the random codes The Machine asked her to type in at certain times, she would be more than happy to shoot Villanelle for being such a brat. Villanelle grinned, making *tick tick tick* noise as she counted the seconds. When five seconds left, they heard the measured tapping of flat shoes against the floor and it was coming closer by the second. Right when the countdown reached zero, Mrs. Leary showed up on doorway. Her eyes searching for Aaron, they widened when she saw him lying on the floor by Shaw's feet, she screeched and then she dropped down like a sack of potatoes—Shaw had shot her with tranquilizer, without even looking up from the laptop.

"Wow." Villanelle turned to Shaw, eyes wide with childish wonder. "How did you do that?"

"He has cameras everywhere, a closed circuit surveillance system." Shaw said, nudging at Aaron with the tip of her boot as she laid the tranquilizer gun on the arm of her chair. Villanelle scoffed; of course he would be *that* creepy. "I routed the surveillance feeds this morning so She has eyes inside."

"*She*?"

Shaw didn't bother to answer the question. She had six minutes before her meeting ended, the security supposed to escort her out while the new face of Decima Technologies came in. Mrs. Leary's scream cut that down into half at most. "Do you trust me now?"

"Guess so."

"Good, because your real boss screwed up with her elaborate plan." There were two numbers to deal with, relevant and irrelevant. Shaw always took the relevant side and She had tipped

off about the irrelevant to someone called Carolyn Martens. Just now She informed Shaw that the irrelevant number had gone pear-shaped. “They took your friend.”

Villanelle’s expression went blank, but Shaw could see her thinking. She had a ridiculous safeword because of stupid procedure forbid her from killing her way out, but there was no way for Eve to tell her if she was in danger. Now someone had taken Eve and she didn’t know how to save her. Shaw waited until it sank in and Villanelle’s eyes darted to the laptop. Aaron’s program would know Eve’s whereabouts, she only needed to type her name in.

“No need for that,” Shaw said. The Machine was in the middle of infecting the program, rendering it useless and taking the data for Herself to strengthen Her grasp all over Europe. “We know where she is.”

“You do?” There was disbelief still. “Tell me.”

Shaw then proceeded to relay what The Machine was telling her to Villanelle, down to the best way to infiltrate and the weakness of each man who was holding Eve. Villanelle was fidgeting with impatience, so she kept it brief.

“Wait,” Shaw said when Villanelle bolted up to her feet. “Take these.” She handed over a Kershaw Tanto Blur. The black folding knife was shorter and wider than the switchblade Villanelle was partial to, but it must do. She then also gave her her backup piece, a Baretta Nano chambered in 9mm and sporting a laser aiming module. She opened her mouth to say something, but frowned instead. “Don’t fail your friend.”

There seemed more to it than Shaw had let on, considering the weight of her words. Villanelle didn’t care. “She's my girlfriend,” she said with pride, to which Shaw only rolled her eyes at. Villanelle took her new toys with a bordering manic grin, the knife fit her grip perfectly and the gun was way prettier than the boring Glock she usually used. “Thanks.” Then she ran off, skipping over Mrs. Leary’s unconscious form and tossing off her pink wig unceremoniously.

The Machine told Shaw that one of the Decima lapdogs would slip on the wig in a minute. She hummed, keeping her stare at Villanelle until she couldn’t see her anymore. “Are you sure she doesn’t need your help?”

While it wasn’t unusual for several numbers to come at once, it was odd that The Machine took Her time to inform Shaw about Villanelle in particular, someone who just happened to have ties with both relevant an irrelevant numbers and nothing more. The more She told her, however, the easier it was to see the reason. A manipulative killer-for-hire with lack of morality and a penchant for playing different roles. *Great, another Root*, was the first thought that crossed Shaw’s mind. Fusco would be having a field day if he ever met Villanelle, calling her with nicknames like *baby Root* or *Root junior* or *mini cocoa puffs*.

“*She can handle herself.*”

“I know.” Shaw paused, considering her next words. “But if she reminded you of yourself so much—“ she caught herself, sometimes the line was too blurry and she stumbled “—if she reminded you of *her* so much, don’t you want to help her too?”

"*Someone already does,*" The Machine—Root—both of them were smiling. "*They're perfect for each other, and they have figured that out.*"

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